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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/077,618	02/15/2002	Alexander J. Feigl	AFEI:002US 10006443	2880
7590	03/31/2006		EXAMINER	
Mark T. Garrett Fulbright & Jaworski L.L.P. 600 Congress Avenue, Suite 2400 Austin, TX 78701			EREZO, DARWIN P	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3731	

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/077,618	FEIGL, ALEXANDER J.
	Examiner Darwin P. Erez	Art Unit 3731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 January 2006.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-11 and 31-91 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 81-91 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-6,31-36 and 64-75 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 7-11,37-41 and 76-80 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

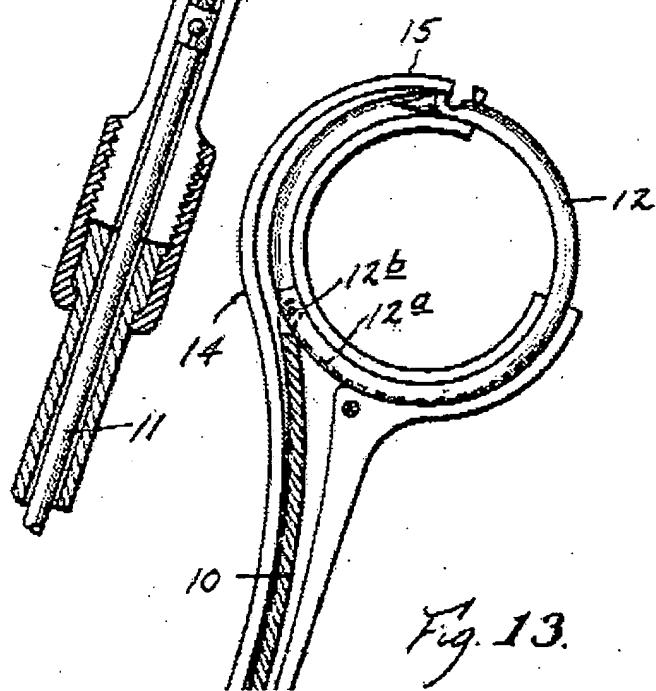
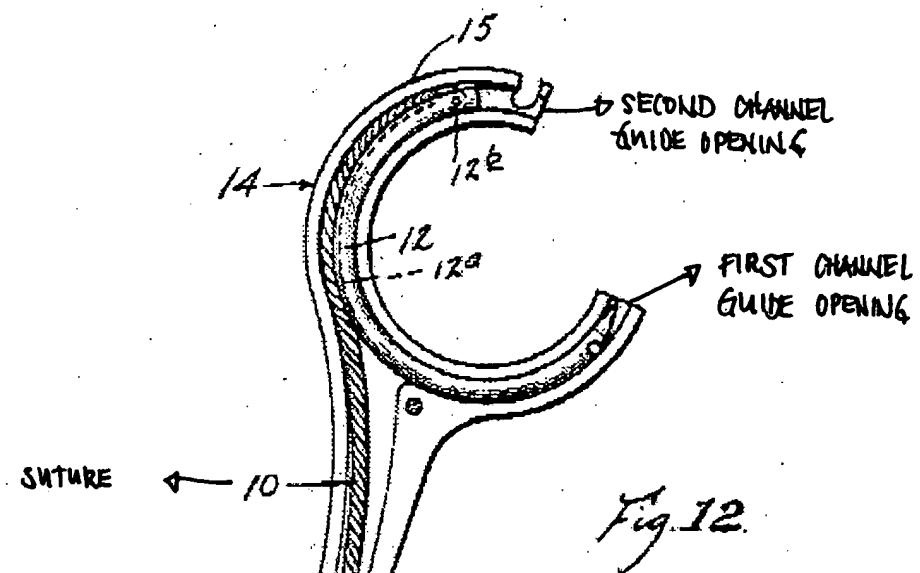
A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-6, 31-36 and 64-75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 1,822,330 to Ainslie.

(claims 1, 31, 64, 70) Ainslie teaches a medical device comprising a body **14**; a lumen extending from a first lumen opening formed in the body to a second lumen opening formed in the body (the lumen where flexible cable **10** is located), the lumen being substantially centered within the body; a first needle guide channel extending from a first needle guide channel opening formed in the body to a second needle guide channel formed in the body; and a needle **12** connected to a length of suture **10** and backloaded into the first needle guide channel (the flexible cable is viewed as a suture since the general definition for a suture is "a strand or fiber used (or capable) to sew parts of the living body"; www.m-w.com), the suture being threaded through the lumen such that when the length of suture is pulled in a first direction, the needle will be advanced out of the first needle guide channel in a second direction; the medical device being configured such that the first needle guide channel opening and the second needle guide channel opening will be directly exposed to a patient's tissue (Fig. 5).

Ainslie also teaches that when the suture 10 is pulled downward, the needle is advanced upward (from Fig. 12 to Fig. 13).



(claims 2, 32, 65, 71) The needle guide channel is arcuate shaped (see Figure above).

(claims 3-5, 33-35, 66-68, 72-74) The device further comprises a handle that is coupled to the body by a connector piece, wherein the connector piece is bendable (see Figure 11; needle casing 14 is attached to a flexible connector tube that is coupled to a handle)

(claims 6, 36, 69, 75) A portion of the body is tapered (see the distal portion of the needle casing 14).

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 7-11, 37-41, 76-80 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

4. Claims 81-91 are allowed.

5. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art of record to Ainslie fails to teach or provide motivation to modify the device to include more than one suturing needle and its associated channel guide and channel guide openings.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-6, 31-36 and 64-75 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Darwin P. Erezo whose telephone number is (571) 272-4695. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:30-4:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anhtuan T. Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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GLENN K. L. D.
PRIMARY EXAMINER